7. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme- 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', a new component has been added for initiating 'Recovery Programme for critically endangered species and their habitats" during the 11th Five Year plan period.

Legal provisions against exploding crackers

2678. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether, in view of the fact that the practice of exploding crackers, bombs etc. on religious occasions like Diwali and on weddings is on the increase in the country, thereby, aggravating the population level quite often, there is any proposal under Governments consideration, in consultation with State Governments, to make the legal provision for strict action against those indulging in such practices; and

(b) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The Hon'ble Supreme Court *vide* its order, dated 18th July, 2005, in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 72 of 1998 read with Civil appeal No. 3735 of 2005 arising out of SLP (C) No. 2185/2003, has ordered that there shall be complete ban on the bursting of sound emitting firecrackers between 10 pm and 6 am. The Hon'bie Apex Court has further said that it is not necessary to impose restrictions as to time on bursting of colour/light emitting firecrackers. The said orders are implemented by concerned Authorities notified under the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 across the country.

Cleaning of Ganga River

2679. SHRIMATI KUSUM RAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has extended the target to clean river Ganga by 2020;

(b) if so, the details of the course of action;

(c) whether due to sewage of cities along the river and industrial waste/pollution Ganga has become a dirty drain;

(d) whether it is a fact that sewage treatment capacity in different cities of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal are not sufficient and in accordance with the need; and

(e) if so, the details of the steps Government has taken/proposes to take to make Ganga pollution free, till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (e) Ganga Action Plan was launched as a centrally funded scheme in 1985 with the objective of improving the water quality of the Ganga. Various pollution abatement

works like Interception & Diversion of sewage, setting up of sewage treatment plants, low cost sanitation works, crematoria works, etc. were taken up. An expenditure of Rs.837.40 crore has been incurred for river Ganga, and a sewage treatment capacity of 1025 million liters per day (mid) has been created so far under the Plan.

Water quality monitoring carried out by reputed institutions such as, IIT, Kanpur, BHEL, Patna University, etc. indicates that, water quality of the river Ganga conforms to the prescribed standards in terms of key indicators, namely, Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Dissolved Oxygen (DO) at most of the locations, except in the stretch between Kannauj and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. However, the levels of fecal coliforms are reported to be exceeding the maximum permissible limit at a number of monitoring stations along the river Ganga.

The Central Government has constituted the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 on 20th February, 2009 as an empowered planning, financing, monitoring and coordinating authority for conservation of the Ganga River. Action has been initiated for preparation of a comprehensive Ganga river basin management plan which will form the basis for formulation of projects.

Currently, sewage treatment capacity of 1025 mld is available against about 3000 mld being generated in the towns along Ganga. To address this gap, the first meeting of the NGRBA held on 5th October 2009 resolved that by the year 2020, it will be ensured that no untreated municipal sewage or industrial effluent flows into Ganga. The investment required to create the necessary treatment and sewerage infrastructure will be shared suitably between Centre and States after consultation with the States, Ministry of Finance and the Planning Commission.

Conservation of rivers is an ongoing and collective effort of the Central and State Governments. River conservation activities such as creation of civic infrastructure for sewage management and disposal are also being implemented under other central schemes, such as Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns, as well as under state schemes.

Mega food processing parks

2680. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to set up mega food processing parks; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) and (b) In the 11th Plan, the Government has approved a new scheme to establish 30 Mega Food Parks with a view to provide state-of-the-art infrastructure for food processing sector in the country on a pre-identified cluster basis with a strong backward and forward linkage and to provide value